

of his two apostles there were literal songs in the night; and they were the antetypes of thousands of Christian experiences in all subsequent times. It has always been the test of the deepest and the strongest faith that, like the nightingale, it could pour forth its sweetest melodies in the hours of darkness. This is a spiritual phenomenon, not to be explained by ordinary law. It is supernatural. The Bible tells us that "God our Maker giveth songs in the night." This happy phrase explains itself. It means that in times of sorest affliction our heavenly Father gives His faithful children cause for songs—both the matter to sing about and the spirit of grateful praise. While they are sitting under the shadow of severe trial he can wrap them about with "the garment of praise" and fill their mouths with singing. While selfishness is fretting and unbelief is blaspheming, faith has a voice of its own—pitched to a high key of love and trust and gratitude and holy joy. That old-time saint had caught this pitch when he sang: "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; * * * and the field shall yield no meat; * * * yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will joy in the God of my salvation." You cannot starve a man who is feeding on God's promises; and you cannot make any man or woman wretched who has a clean conscience and the smile of God, and the love of Jesus shed in their souls.

There are some of us old-fashioned-Christians who still believe that a loving God creates dark nights as well as bright noondays; that he not only permits trouble, but sometimes sends troubles on His own children for their spiritual profit. As many as he loves, he sometimes corrects and chastens. And a truly filial faith recognizes that all his dealings are perfectly right. Happy is the man whom God correcteth; therefore despise not thou the chastenings of the Almighty." I have seen a farmer drive his plowshare through a velvet greensward, and it looked like a harsh, cruel process; but the farmer's eye foresaw the springing blades of wheat, and that within a few months that torn soil would laugh with a golden harvest. Deep soul-plowings bring rich fruits of the spirit. I have often had occasion to tell my parishioners that their are bitter mercies as well as sweet mercies but they are all mercies, whether given to us in honey or given in wormwood.

The day is God's and the night also. This is as true in the realm of grace as in the realm of nature. God orders the withdrawal of the sun at evening time, yet that very withdrawal reveals new glories

in the midnight sky. Then how the creation widens to our view! The stars that lay concealed behind the noontide rays rush out and fill the spangled canopy. So in the night seasons which often descend upon the Christian, fresh glories of the divine love are revealed, fresh power is given to our faith, fresh victories are won, and a new development is made of godly character. What sweet voices—like the "influences of the Pleiades"—are God's promises to our chastened hearts! What deep melodies of praise do the night hours hear! The Lord commandeth His loving-kindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me.

I trust that these simple, honest words may come as a lamp into some dark chamber, or into some sorely troubled hearts. Bethany had to become a dark town to two poor women before Jesus could flood it with joy. Before Gethseman's midnight struggle Christ himself chanted a hymn; and happy is the man or woman who can go into life's hard battle singing. The ear of God hears no sublimer music than a Christian's songs in the night.

WALKING WITH GOD.

Walking is, throughout the whole Bible, made to illustrate the activity, intelligence, and progress of Christian life. It is so used in Genesis to describe the life of holy communion which Enoch lived upon earth. It is used in the Revelation, where the holy and active life in heaven is spoken of as a walking in white. And in some form the same word is used in nearly every intermediate book of Scripture to portray the life of the Christian here on earth.

Walking is a manifestation of life and of strength. It is calculated to develop the strength also, and is a dignified and independent movement. It is progressive and straightforward, for nothing is worthy of the name in which one does not move forward in the direction in which he may, ordinarily, have the guidance which comes from using his eyes and clearly seeing the path before him.

The Christian has a path marked out for him in God's word. It is carefully described by God himself in his commandments and precepts. It is the way of truth and righteousness. It is the way of goodness and holiness. It leads through this world, past dangers and difficulties, through the midst of temptations and besetments, but it is always a clear way and a clean way. It passes through valleys, oftentimes, of humility, pain, sorrow, and even the shadow of death. But it leads over the mountains too. Sometimes

there is a Hill Difficulty, but there are Delectable Mountains and Mounts of Vision. The path leads out of sin and away from destruction. It begins fairly only at the cross of Calvary, but it leads on to the gates of pearl and widens out into the streets of gold. It may seem somewhat narrow upon earth in the beginning, but there is always room for two on it, for the Saviour will walk with everyone who trusts him. It is not wide enough for the ravenous beasts of worldliness, for it is a way of holiness and peace.

There is always light on the path. It may sometimes lead through dark places, but the Christian may always have a lamp to his feet and a light to his path shining out from God's word. And the way grows brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.

The Christian may always walk in this road, and when God enlarges his heart, and makes him especially glad and buoyant-hearted, he can run in the way of the commandments. He cannot be cast down easily, even though the way may be rough, and God makes him sure-footed like the hind, that can only climb among the rocks.

God expects us to walk. It is not enough to be alive and be fed, even with the sincere milk of the word. We are not to expect to be carried to the skies. We are to walk. We are to learn something and do something day by day. We are not to be satisfied with living a poor-paying rate. We should know more about God's work than we did a year ago, and we should delight more in prayer, in giving, in Christian service. We should have a better grasp of the great truths of God, and be better able to teach and tell others the old, old story of Jesus and his love.

For, although some people may wander away from God, and call it progress; although some may become loose in their faith and belief, and may think that they have outgrown and have become wise above the things that God has revealed, and may call themselves progressive, this does not change the fact that there is such a thing as real advance and true Christian progress. He only walks in the right direction and in safe company who walks with God. He who discards the truths of the Gospel may think himself very intellectual and very progressive, but he is walking in the counsel of the ungodly, and although it may seem right to him, the end of it is death.

He who walks with God must first agree with him, and must choose him as the guide of his youth. He will then have the safest guidance, the sweetest company, the most delightful companionship, the best protection, and the surest ending of life's journey. He will be guided by the divine counsel while he lives upon earth, and afterward will be received into glory. —*Herald and Presbyters.*